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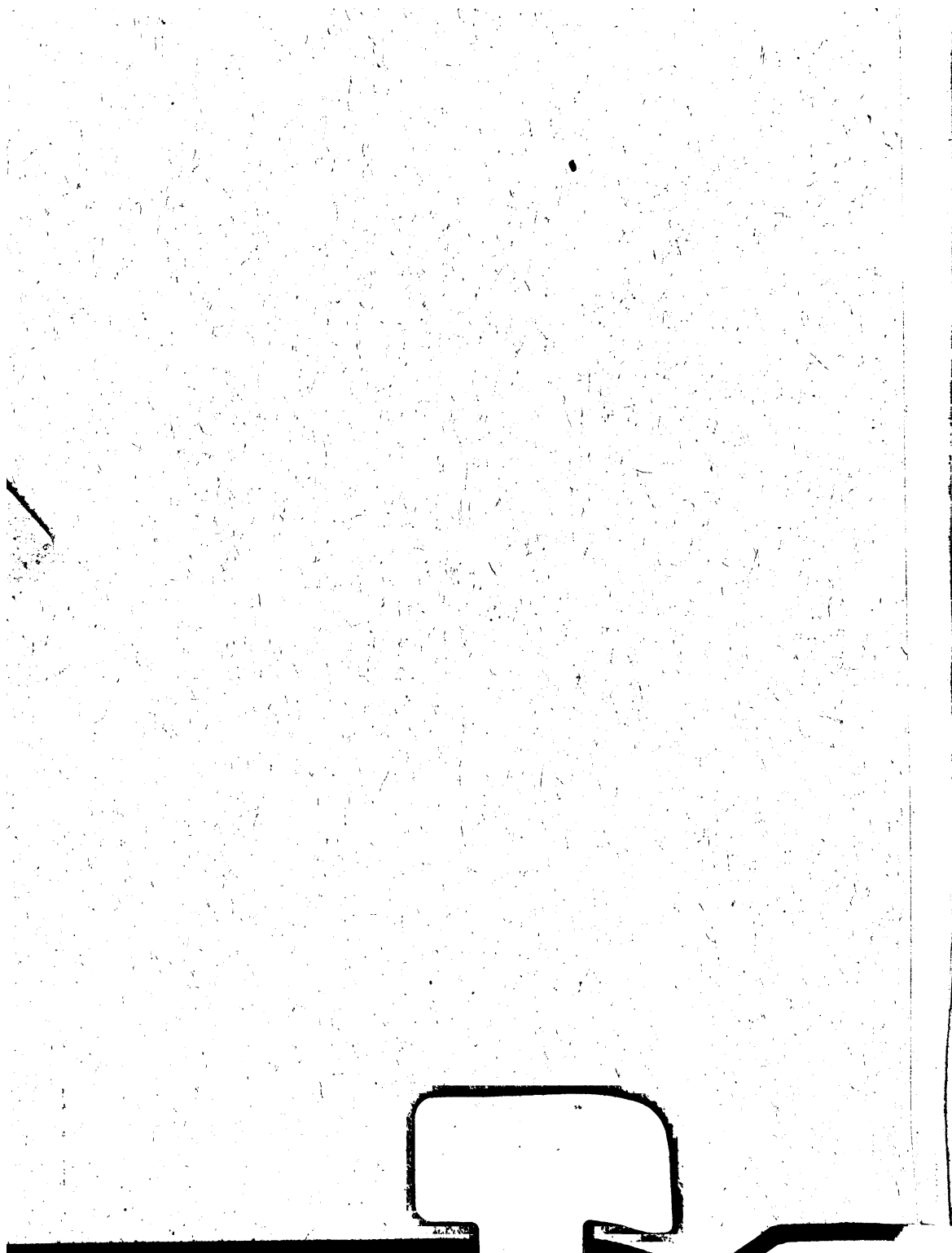
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Parkinson
Parker

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180719
Rev M Thompson

DISCOURSE

OCCASIONED

BY THE

DEATH

OF THE

Rev. Joseph Buckminster, D. D. +

PASTOR OF THE NORTH CHURCH IN

PORTSMOUTH,

WHO DIED AT READSBOROUGH, VER.

JUNE 10, 1812,

DELIVERED TO HIS BEREAVED PEOPLE

JUNE 19, 1812,

By Nathan Parker,
Minister of the South Church.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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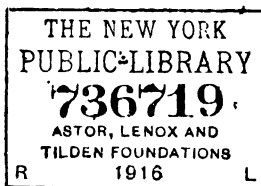
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A Discourse.

ACTS—CHAPTER 20. VERSE XXIV.

BUT NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME ; NEITHER COUNT I MY LIFE DEAR UNTO MYSELF, SO THAT I MIGHT FINISH MY COURSE WITH JOY, AND THE MINISTRY, WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD JESUS, TO TESTIFY THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

IT is a duty, which we owe to ourselves, to virtue, to religion, and to God, that we suffer not the memory of the righteous to perish. It is a duty, which we owe to the Great Redeemer, thankfully to acknowledge the rich blessings, granted to his church ; and, when his faithful servants are removed from their earthly labors to pay our humble tribute of respect to their worth, and impress their virtues upon our hearts.

A scene of uncommon woe has called us this day to the house of God. He, who giveth not account of himself to man, has, under circumstances of peculiar distress, called from this world a servant of Christ, who, for many years, broke to this church the bread of life, breathed in this place the spirit of pure devotion, was the medium of communication between heaven and earth, and testified to this people THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

WITH great embarrassment I appear before you on this melancholy occasion. Having in the course of a few days been

addressed to the church, Jan. 10/16. P. 50

hurried from one scene of affliction to another, each increasing in darkness and distress, my mind has been overwhelmed in dismay ; and I know not how to address you. Gladly would I shrink from public view, and yield this place to some one, whose talents, and christian experience, would enable him more accurately to describe, and more forcibly to impress upon your minds, the character of him, whose loss we deplore ; and would give a deeper interest in your hearts to the consolations of THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD. But I am not placed here to indulge personal grief, nor to aggravate the sufferings of the afflicted. I would, as a minister of Christ, and in the name of him, who came into this world to bind up the broken-hearted, assist you in properly noticing and improving the solemn Providence, which has covered this temple with mourning, and filled your eyes with tears.

As a proper guide on this mournful occasion, I have selected a part of Paul's address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, whom he met for the last time upon earth : BUT NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME ; NEITHER COUNT I MY LIFE DEAR UNTO MYSELF, SO THAT I MIGHT FINISH MY COURSE WITH JOY, AND THE MINISTRY, WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD JESUS, TO TESTIFY THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD. These words express that perfect devotion of heart to God, which every minister of Christ ought to have made. They are expressive of ardor in the service of Jesus Christ, and of a determined resolution of fidelity to him, though dangers, difficulties and death, should threaten.

Paul with full conviction, that his course would be marked with the most tremendous sufferings, that his life would be in

perpetual jeopardy, WAS NOT DISOBEDIENT TO THE HEAVENLY VISION. He, when impressed with conviction of the truth, as it is in Jesus ; when his spiritual vision was purged, and he saw the worth and the glory of THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD ; when he became impressed with its absolute necessity to the salvation of a sinful world, put on the ARMOR OF GOD, and enlisted, as a determined, zealous and powerful soldier under the banner of the Cross ; and commenced a conflict against ignorance, sin and wretchedness.

The prominent traits in the character of this great apostle, were deep conviction of the truth and importance of the religion, which he advocated ; a firmness in promoting its interests, which no difficulties could overcome ; a zeal, never wearied in the service of his Master ; such perfect devotion of heart to Jesus Christ, as in his view rendered worthless all human distinctions, and of no account all temporal embarrassments, when compared with the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the honours reserved for those, who successfully struggle in the glorious combat, to which he was devoted.

Paul, educated in the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, having imbibed the prejudices of his nation, once opposed the faith, which afterwards he embraced and defended. All the powers of his vigorous and cultivated mind, all the firmness, and persevering industry, for which his character was ever distinguished, were brought into operation for the destruction of the humble followers of the Lamb, and the religion, which to them was dearer, than life. Christ appeared to him, and poured upon his mind the light of heavenly truth. He arrested the messen-

ger of cruelty in his sanguinary career. Paul saw, believed and embraced the Saviour. By miraculous interposition his mind was enlightened, and his heart sanctified. The glories of the Gospel beamed upon him. They entirely occupied his vigorous intellect, and softened his heart to devotion and love. Faith in Christ became deeply fixed ; the truths of the Gospel gained his unwavering belief, and to be an instrument in enlightening and saving sinners, became an object of sacred ambition. That conviction of the truth, and importance of the Gospel, had perfect control of his mind and heart, cannot be doubted, when are recollected the sufferings and labours, which he endured in its advancement.

When Paul submitted to the authority of Christ, he did not anticipate a life of ease and splendour. He knew the circumstances of the church. He knew the malignant and persevering opposition, which was making to destroy her existence, to pour contempt upon her sons, and to obliterate every vestige of the religion of Jesus. At all times he might have said, as he did, when about to visit Jerusalem : I GO---NOT KNOWING THE THINGS, THAT SHALL BEFAL ME---SAVE, THAT THE HOLY GHOST WITNESSETH IN EVERY CITY, SAYING, THAT BONDS AND AFFLICTIONS ABIDE ME. With that firmness of spirit, which a consciousness of the goodness of the cause, in which he was engaged, inspired, and with a deep conviction of the importance of the services, which he was commanded to perform, this christian hero met the dangers of his course, regardless of difficulties, that he might TESTIFY THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD. The trials, through which he passed, might have overwhelmed an ordinary mind, in any common cause. A catalogue of them

is given by himself. OF THE JEWS FIVE TIMES RECEIVED I FORTY STRIPES, SAVE ONE, THRICE WAS I BEATEN WITH RODS, ONCE WAS I STONED, THRICE I SUFFERED SHIPWRECK, A NIGHT AND A DAY I HAVE BEEN IN THE DEEP: IN JOURNEYINGS OFTEN, IN PERILS OF WATERS, IN PERILS OF ROBBERS, IN PERILS BY MINE OWN COUNTRYMEN, IN PERILS BY THE HEATHEN, IN PERILS IN THE CITY, IN PERILS IN THE WILDERNESS, IN PERILS IN THE SEA, IN PERILS AMONG FALSE BRETHREN; IN WEARINESS AND PAINFULNESS, IN WATCHINGS OFTEN, IN HUNGER AND THIRST, IN FASTINGS OFTEN, IN COLD AND NAKEDNESS. BESIDE THOSE THINGS, THAT ARE WITHOUT, THAT WHICH COMETH UPON ME DAILY, THE CARE OF ALL THE CHURCHES. Such were the sufferings of this holy man; yet he did not shrink from the christian warfare on account of the heat of the battle. With true christian firmness he says, I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST, WHO STRENGTHENETH ME. Difficulties, and dangers never bore down his mind. *None of these things moved him.* His zeal never abated, but at all times glowed in his bosom. *He did not count his life dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry, which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* He was entirely devoted to his Master, and the best interests of mankind. Though flattered with the prospect of distinction among the learned men of his nation, he was willing to be thought a fool by the advocates of worldly wisdom, that he might advance the reign of righteousness. He abandoned without a sigh every hope of earthly honor, when the indulgence of it was inconsistent with his duty to Christ. He was not left unsupported. He had the christian privilege of rejoicing in tribulations. His affections were placed on things above, and the hopes of religion

rendered him superior to the fluctuations of earth. *He rejoiced, that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ.* So entirely was he devoted to the Redeemer, that he considered, as nothing, the sacrifices, which he made in his service. YEA, DOUBTLESS, AND I COUNT ALL THINGS BUT LOSS FOR THE EXCELLENCY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST JESUS MY LORD; FOR WHOM I HAVE SUFFERED THE LOSS OF ALL THINGS, AND I DO COUNT THEM BUT REFUSE, THAT I MAY WIN CHRIST AND BE FOUND IN HIM, NOT HAVING MINE OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH IS AFTER THE LAW, BUT THAT, WHICH IS THROUGH THE FAITH OF CHRIST, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF GOD BY FAITH; THAT I MAY KNOW HIM, AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS, BEING MADE CONFORMABLE UNTO HIS DEATH; IF BY ANY MEANS I MIGHT ATTAIN UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

The firmness, which Paul manifested in the cause of Christ, the uniform zeal, and exertion, which he displayed in his service, the unreserved consecration of himself, amid difficulties and dangers, to the cause, in which he was engaged, leave no doubt of the strength of his faith, and the importance, attached in his mind, to the religion, which he advocated. The calmness and joy, with which he passed through a ministry, filled with calamities, bear unequivocal evidence of the power of gospel principles and motives to sustain the mind under the pressure of adversity. *He finished his course with joy, and the ministry, which he received of the Lord Jesus.* He proclaimed to a great part of the civilized world the good news of salvation through a Redeemer; *and faithfully testified the gospel of the grace of God.* When his Master called him from the scene of his earthly labours, he was ready to depart, esteeming it a privilege *to be absent from the body, that he might be present with the Lord.*

These reflections have been made upon the character of Paul, that your feelings and my own, might be prepared for some appropriate remarks on the character of that venerable servant of Jesus, whose loss we deplore. You will not expect from me a complete delineation of the character of the late respected and beloved pastor of this church. Such a task, at any time, I should be incapable of performing ; under the circumstances, in which I now appear before you, I shall not attempt to perform it. If sincere respect, and love for the servant of God, whose death we lament, can claim indulgence for the imperfect sketches, which may be given, I shall have secured to me your candour. If what may be said shall be unworthy of the occasion, on which I am called to address you, I shall be solaced with the belief, that the character of your departed friend and spiritual guide will not suffer ; for, I trust, that his excellencies are deeply impressed upon your hearts, and that you will do justice to his memory.

The Rev. JOSEPH BUCKMINSTER, D. D. was born in Rutland, Mass. Oct. 14, 1751. His father, during a long ministry in that town, was distinguished for his active zeal in the duties of his sacred office. The late pastor of this church was early destined for professional life. He was admitted, as a student in Yale College, and received the usual honours of that seminary. How he occupied his time during his academical course ; and in what estimation he was held by the literary guardians of that respectable seminary, may be inferred from his being elected to the office of tutor, in which he continued four years. While an undergraduate, he became seriously impressed with religious truth, and, as he hoped, reconciled to God by faith in his Son. From this important period of his life, till he became the pastor of this

church, his attention was directed to preparations for the christian ministry. In January 1779 he was solemnly dedicated to the pastoral office in this place.

The character of Dr. Buckminster's mind was strongly marked. It had much originality. No person could be considerably conversant with him without noticing that strength of volition, which always indicates superiority of intellectual endowments. His mind was rapid in its operations, and impatient of delay. His imagination was excursive, and ever on the wing. In the character of his mind, he appeared to have been qualified for distinction in the department of elegant literature. Such in early life was his taste for the charms of music and poetry, that he seriously apprehended, he should forego solid usefulness of character to enjoy the pleasures of fancy. Under this apprehension he almost totally abstracted himself from his favourite pursuits, and for Parnassus, substituted Mount Zion. In his services, as a christian minister, traces of a playful imagination were ever discoverable. He seemed to delight to dwell on the figurative language, and rich imagery of the scriptures, and to dress the solemn truths of religion in all the ornaments, which the sacred classics could supply.

His passions were naturally ardent and strong. They required all the power of christianity for their control. This power was employed, and they were sanctified to his Master's service. His heart was warm, affectionate and generous. Frankness and honesty were traits in his character, which all, who knew him, must have observed and admired. His purposes were formed by the dictates of conscience, and he wished for no concealment; his errors were such as good men may commit.

and he was ever forward, when they were perceived by him, to acknowledge them. His conscience was remarkably delicate and tender. He had such a deep impression of the nature of sin, that he habitually shrunk from it, as from every thing base, dishonorable, and opposed to the character of that God, whom he served. He used every proper means of preserving the delicacy of his moral taste ; and through life was remarkable for the quickness, with which he perceived any deviation from moral rectitude, and for the lively sensibility, with which he observed the slightest shades of iniquity.

I have attempted to fix upon some of the prominent traits in the character of Dr. Buckminster's mind and heart, as they have been impressed upon me, during the short period, in which I have been indulged with the privilege of his acquaintance. If the description, given, be in any degree correct, it might have been expected, that such natural talents, sanctified by religion, would attract the attention of the friends of Christ, and be the means of advancing his glorious cause. His natural talents were sanctified, and entirely devoted to the *ministry, which he received of the Lord Jesus*. In the formation of his ministerial character, and the discharge of the duties of his sacred office, his whole soul was engaged. Though he felt most sensibly the contempt, poured by sinners upon the kind messages of his Master, and often lamented with much feeling the apparent inefficacy of his labours ; yet he never relaxed his exertions to do good. He could have said, when struggling with the difficulties, and discouragements, which attend the duties of the christian ministry, NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME ; NEITHER COUNT I MY LIFE DEAR UNTO MYSELF, SO THAT I MAY FINISH MY COURSE

WITH JOY, AND THE MINISTRY WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD JESUS, TO TESTIFY THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

Dr. Buckminster having early devoted himself to God in the Gospel of his Son, from a full conviction of the divine origin of christianity, of the infinite worth of the truths, which it reveals, and of the absolute necessity of the mediation of Jesus Christ to prepare the way for the reconciliation of sinners unto God, advocated the cause of his Master with firmness ; and with persevering zeal besought sinners to spurn the degrading bondage of iniquity, to accept the gracious offers of pardon; *to taste and see, that the Lord is good.* By his uniform exertions, and his entire consecration of himself to Christ, he proved, that he was "honest in the sacred cause." Possessing a vigorous constitution of body, he was enabled, with more constancy, than many of his brethren, to labour in the vineyard of his Lord. He wished not to withhold himself from the work ; but was willing to *spend, and be spent in his Masters service.* *He was in labours more abundant.* He appeared ever anxious to discover means, by which he could gain access to the human heart, and inculcate the truths of the gospel. All, who wished for his instructions, found him gratified with affording them his assistance. In promoting an acquaintance with the sacred scriptures, and in cultivating among the people of his charge a devotional spirit, he employed much of his time. To these purposes he stately devoted portions of each week ; and has often expressed the pleasure, which he received from attending with his friends, seasons separated for improvement in religious knowledge, and for exercises of piety.

In times of sickness and sorrow he appeared, as a minister

of the great physician of souls. He gave his aid in encouraging the hopes of the humble christian, languishing by disease. He unfolded to him the animating promises of *the gospel of the grace of God*, and assured him, that death had no power to injure his best interests ; for Jesus had taken away its sting, and *brought life and immortality to light*. When he saw a sinner sinking into the grave careless concerning the scenes, which were to open beyond it, he felt all the solicitude and painful anxiety, which the most sacred friendship could inspire. With the utmost plainness, and with affectionate zeal he explained to him the conditions of salvation, and pressed upon him the absolute necessity of REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD, AND FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST. He directed the thoughts of mourners to God, the good Father of all ; inculcated resignation to his will, as a rational duty ; taught the uses of adversity, by his own prayers recommended them to divine mercy, and instructed them in the language and spirit, in which they might address God, with a hope, that he would heal the wounds, which he had inflicted, and enable them to *rejoice in tribulation*. *He was instant in season, and out of season, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

The characteristics of his publick services were great solicitude for the honour of Christ, and the souls of men ; great solemnity and fervour. His prayers breathed a spirit of ardent piety. They were evidence, that human wants, the dangers, which encompass the christian's course, and the conflicts, to which goodness is exposed, were subjects of habitual thought, and of retired prayer. He took delight in devotional exercises, and was much engaged in them. He very justly considered de-

OF THE LORD AND THE MINISTRY WHENCE I HAVE RECEIVED OF
THE LORD [blank] TO TRUST THE COMPTON OF THE GRACE
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of the great physician of souls. He gave him the hopes of the humble christian, unfolded to him the animating promises of God, and assured him, that Jesus had taken the best interests; for Jesus had taken the life and immortality to give. When he was in the grave careless concerning the future, beyond it, he felt all the sollicitude of the most sacred friendship, which with affectionate beginnings of salvation, and perfect repentance toward God, that he

REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD. He directed the ministry, he the good Father of all; invited sinners to rational duty; taught the student, and recommended them to the ministry, language and spirit, in which to glorify the gospel of the hope, that he would lead them to a christian minister, and enable them to give testimony, in which he was son, and out of him, best declared by his being public occasions, where engaged; the manner, in which to him, and to those, who of respect for his character, of Doctor of Divinity from a of our country.

These were published at the request of those, the list of them could not be obtained for in- remain in the hands of his friends, as a specimen eloquence.

votion, as the life of christian goodness, and often lamented the dreadful neglect of the duties of piety, which he had much reason to fear, was characteristic of our times.

In preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, he came to his people deeply impressed with the infinite importance of the subjects, to which he called their attention, and earnestly desirous of affecting their hearts, that he might present them with joy at the bar of God. His sermons were not laboured by art ; but were calculated to impress the mind with the infinite worth of the religion, which they were designed to support, and inculcate. His mind was not accustomed to the regular management of argumentative discourse. It was impatient of the forms of close investigation, and systematick reasoning. It glanced with rapidity from one subject to another ; and, when truth was thought to be discovered, was eager to give to it a practical effect. His discourses, therefore, were often rather a collection of truths and exhortations, deemed important and useful, than a systematick arrangement of thoughts on any particular subject. His sermons were always serious ; his addresses to the heart and conscience affectionate, impressive, and often eloquent.

No man was less disposed, than Dr. Buckminster, to enter the field of theological controversy. His affections were too much mellowed and sweetened by the spirit of the gospel, to permit him to feel, or exercise that theological hatred, which is often at the bottom of disputes, falsely called christian ; and which is always strengthened by the manner, in which they are generally managed. What he believed, he believed with his whole heart, and defended with the firmness of full conviction, and the warmth of strong feeling. In the expressions of his be-

lief he was honest ; and toward those, who differed from him, he was willing to extend his charity. To the catholicism of his heart, to his possession of that *charity, which hopeth all things*, my own experience enables me to bear decided testimony ; and I do it with sentiments of gratitude and respect.

Were he to consent to be classed with any particular denomination of christians, he would rank himself with the Calvinists of the *old school*. He adopted their modes of interpreting the scriptures, and gave his decided support to the doctrines, which they maintain. His faith remained unchanged from the beginning to the end of his christian course ; and the belief, that he had faithfully preached the truth to his people, was the consolation of his last hours. During the course of his ministry, he ever appeared happy, when engaged in beseeching sinners to become reconciled to God. *He did not count his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry, which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* His accomplishments, as a christian minister, attracted public attention. "The estimation, in which he was held by those, who knew him, is best declared by his being called to officiate on those various public occasions, where eminence and distinction are desired ; the manner, in which he acquitted himself, did honor to him, and to those, who selected him.*" As a mark of respect for his character, he was honored with a degree of Doctor of Divinity from a respectable literary institution of our country.

* Many of Dr. B's Sermons were published at the request of those, who heard them. A complete list of them could not be obtained for insertion in this place. They remain in the hands of his friends, as a specimen of his talents, and pulpit eloquence.

Upon his domestic character may be bestowed unqualified praise. He was a husband, who deserved and received affectionate respect. He was a father, to whom his children looked with confidence, as their friend and guide ; whom they venerated and loved.

But nothing on earth is permanent. The good man, whose loss we deplore, was constitutionally exposed to distressing nervous affections ; and to deep gloom of mind. During the last winter and spring, his friends observed, that his health was in some degree impaired ; and that he was often extremely depressed. The gloom gradually thickened, and the distress increased. A few days since, we beheld, with trembling anxiety, that the cloud had completely enveloped him ; and at times, that the traces of rational existence were almost entirely concealed.* It was hoped, that by taking him from the cares of his laborious office, by giving him relaxation, and leading his thoughts to the various and enchanting scenes, which at this season, the face of nature presents, his nerves might be braced, tranquility of mind restored, and he be returned to continue, with his usual ardour and success, the duties of an ambassador of Christ. But our hopes are destroyed. Though much of his journey was passed by him in composure of mind ; yet at some periods of it he was afflicted with a most distressing state of the nervous system. By the sufferings of these periods, his strength was sensibly diminished. As the end of his course drew nigh, the tranquility of his mind was restored. He was not per-

* The Dr. experienced violent nervous spasms, during which his mind was very much disordered. These recurred about once or twice a day, and continued from half an hour to an hour.

mitted again to pass through a scene of mental suffering. God, in mercy *to him*, appeared for his relief. He removed the darkness, which had enveloped his mind, separated his soul from the prison of the body, and introduced it, as we trust, to an eternal and unclouded day. The last hours of his life were worthy of his character. They were employed in devotional exercises, in expressions of confidence in God, and perfect submission to his will.*

An afflicted family, a bereaved church, a weakened band of brethren in the gospel, and the friends of Christ, who have heard his praise, or been benefited by his labours, remain to mourn his loss.

To the widow we would, on this melancholy occasion, address the consolations of that religion, which she has long professed to believe. You, madam, have been accustomed to pass through scenes of suffering. You have found God faithful to his promises. He has, in times past, been your supporter, and brought you from the furnace of affliction. Trust in him, and he will continue to bless you. Though he has taken the hus-

* Dr. Buckminster left this town the 2d of June. His complaints first appeared alarming to his friends the preceding day. This was the first time, that he had been incapable of attending upon the duties of his office. He preached the day before to his own parish, and administered the Lord's Supper. For more than two days before his death, the friends, who accompanied him, state, that his mind was composed. He was not thought by them to be dangerously sick, before the morning of the day, on which he died. He spent a great part of the two days previous to his death in prayer. He died at Readfborough, Ver. June 10, of a mortification of the bowels: and was respectfully interred at Bennington the next day. The Rev. Mr. Marsh of that town preached an appropriate Sermon on the occasion. The inhabitants testified their respect to his character, and expressed their sympathy with the afflicted widow.

band, on whom you hoped to lean for support, he has left you children to care for your happiness, and to sustain you in the evening of your life. Be grateful for the blessings, which remain, and throw your cares upon the Lord. Remember the instructions and consolations, which, in former scenes of affliction, your deceased husband gave you, and you will not want my feeble endeavours to guide your reflections. The widow's God still lives, and will support you.

The children demand, and have our deepest sympathy. Scarcely had you obtained a moment to compose your feelings after the loss of a brother, who was the pride of the literature of our country, and an ornament of the religion of Jesus, before you were called to a new scene of woe.* You were called by the inscrutable providence of God to receive the overwhelming intelligence, that your guide and guardian was no more; that your father slept in death. Few have possessed such friends; few have been called, under circumstances of so deep distress, to mourn their loss. Be grateful for the legacy of their examples; be grateful, that they have left characters complete and unbroken. But I must desist. He must be insensible to the strong emotions of the soul, who can believe that earthly friends, can afford that support, which you require. I commend you to God; He can and will comfort you. He is saying to you, WHAT I DO, YOU KNOW NOT NOW, BUT YOU SHALL KNOW HEREAFTER. BE OF GOOD COURAGE, AND HE SHALL STRENGTHEN YOUR HEART.

* The Rev. Joseph S. Buckminster, pastor of the church in Brattlestreet, Boston, died June 9th, after a distressing sickness of less than a week. The news of his father's death was given to the family on the 15th of the same month.

We would mingle our tears with the bereaved and afflicted church. He, who broke to you the bread of life, has left you forever. He, who led in your devotions, and brought to you the messages of Jesus Christ, is silenced by death. The word of God in future you must hear from the lips of strangers. You have been richly blessed by the Great Head of the Church. He has given you a faithful minister, and continued to you his labours for more than thirty years. You loved him, and his heart was united to you by the tenderest and most sacred ties. In the dark hours of his affliction tears of gratitude flowed from his eyes, when he saw himself surrounded by friends, whom he had been instrumental of introducing into the church of Christ; and when he heard, that their prayers were ascending to heaven to call down blessings upon his head. Impress his excellencies upon your hearts, catch that spirit of piety, by which his character was distinguished, and which influenced all his active powers. Permit not his instructions to be lost; let them live in your lives, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God. Be instant in prayer, that you may again be furnished with a pastor, *who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding*, and by his example guide you in the way to heaven. I promise you the sympathy and prayers of good men; and, I trust, you will be so humbled under the mighty hand of God, that, in his own time, he will exalt you.

The congregation in this place cannot feel uninterested in the solemn event, which has called us into the house of our God. It becomes you seriously to inquire, how you have heard, and improved, under the ministrations of your departed friend and pastor. He is gone to render account of the manner, in which

he preached ; you must soon answer at the bar of God for the manner, in which you have heard. Though dead, he now addresses you by his past instructions and example, and intreats *you to be followers of Christ as dear children*. He points you to the Saviour, in whom was his trust, and beseeches you to become reconciled to God, that you may be filled with everlasting joy. Particularly are those interested on this occasion, who have enjoyed, and abused the labours of a faithful servant of Christ ; who have hated knowledge and despised reproof. O ! that this providence might speak to such, as in a voice of thunder, and awaken them from the lethargy of sin to spiritual life. You do not know the pain, which by your neglect of Christ and salvation, you have caused your deceased pastor to feel ; and the tears and prayers, which he has poured out for you in secret places. You cannot now affect his happiness. He is gone, where sorrow and sighing are unknown. Death will soon terminate your probation. Tremble, tremble, for your situation. I beseech you, be ye reconciled to God, accept the offered mercy, and fly from the wrath to come.

My fathers, and brethren, in the ministry, we ought, and, I trust, do feel a deep interest on this mournful occasion. In this part of our country, where divisions and animosities are breaking up our churches, the loss, which we are called to deplore, is no small calamity. The venerable servant of Christ, who stately ministered in this place, was an active, pious, and zealous member of our Association. He was ever ready to strengthen our hands, and encourage our hearts. With tenderness he reminded us of our faults, and counseled us in our difficulties. He gave spirit and animation to our meetings, and invigorated our exer-

tions. To our churches he was a welcome messenger of Jesus; and he never refused to labour in the service of his master. We shall see his face no more. The memory of his virtues, I hope, will not be lost, nor his friendly counsels forgotten. At the commencement of the present year, he gave us appropriate instructions on the nature of our calling, and the spirit, which should animate our labours.* He afforded a bright example of ministerial industry and zeal. He has gone to appear before his Judge. We must soon follow him, and give account of our stewardship. God grant, that in the hour of death our rejoicing may be, THE TESTIMONY OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE, THAT IN SIMPLICITY AND GODLY SINCERITY, NOT WITH FLESHLY WISDOM, BUT BY THE GRACE OF GOD, WE HAVE HAD OUR CONVERSATION IN THE WORLD. At that hour may we be enabled to say with as much truth, as we trust, our departed father and friend could; I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH, HENCEFORTH THERE IS LAID UP FOR ME A CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH THE LORD, THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, WILL GIVE ME IN THAT DAY.

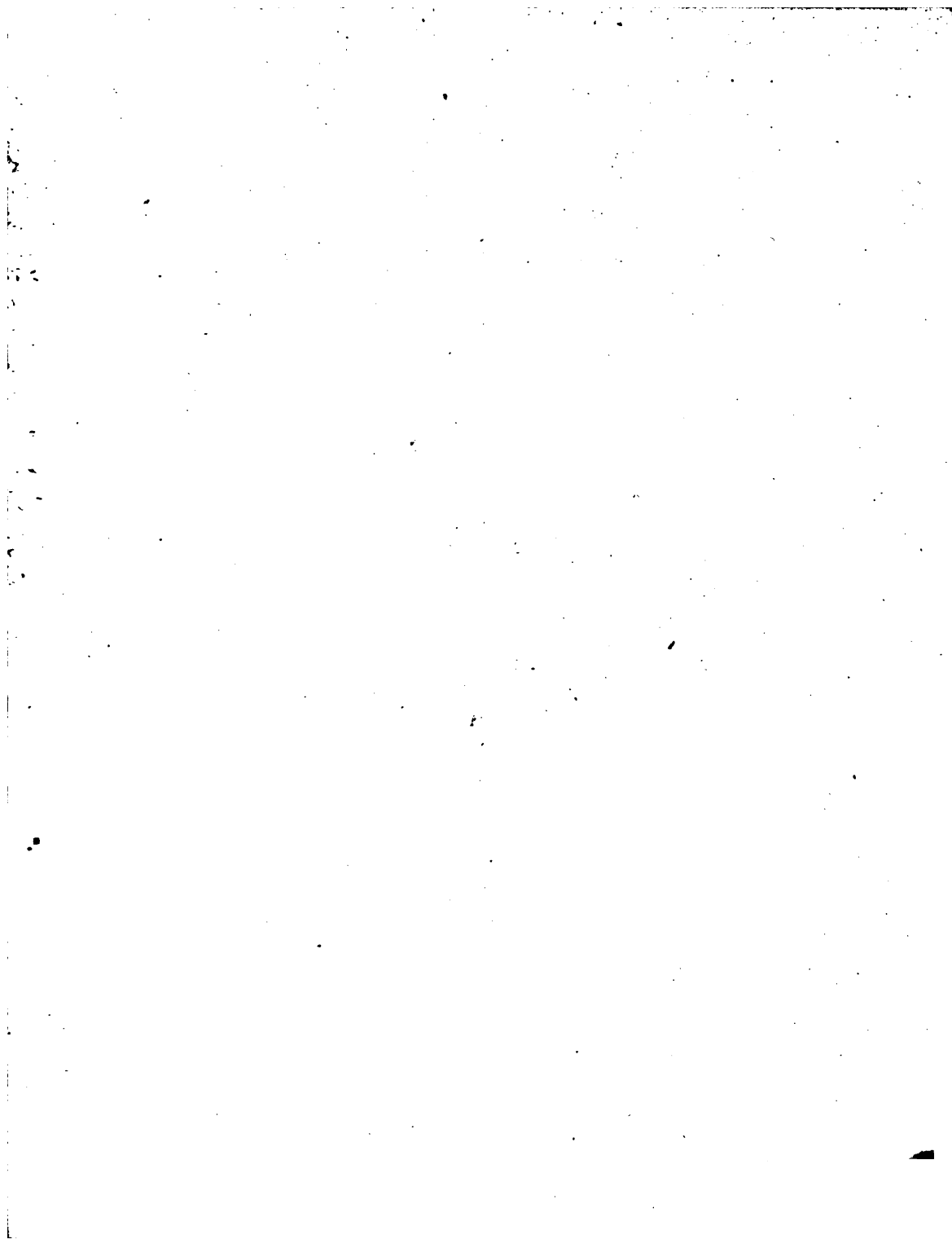
In times like the present, under such melancholy visitations of divine providence, as we are called to witness, we are exposed to indulge feelings of despondency, and to tremble for the ark of

* On the first day of the present year Dr. Buckminster preached a Sermon at Hamptonfalls, particularly addressed to the members of the Association. He unfolded the danger, to which Ministers are exposed of neglecting their own hearts, while they preach to others; the necessity of their possessing personal holiness, and of their aiding each other in the duties of their responsible office by the exercise of candour, charity and love.

our God. But the ministers of Christ, as such, should never know despondency. The religion, which we preach to others, should bear us up under these trials. We are assured, that the gates of hell will never prevail against the church of Christ. It is founded on a rock, and cannot be moved. "The gospel lives, though the preachers of the gospel die. In that there is no change. The everlasting gospel is its name. No vicissitudes of private life, no civil tumults, no publick revolutions, can injure or endanger it. It has comforted our departed friends. When we are dead, it will comfort our surviving relatives. It will guide the living and sustain the dying, till that period of the divine administration shall arrive, when sin, and pain, and death, shall be no more."



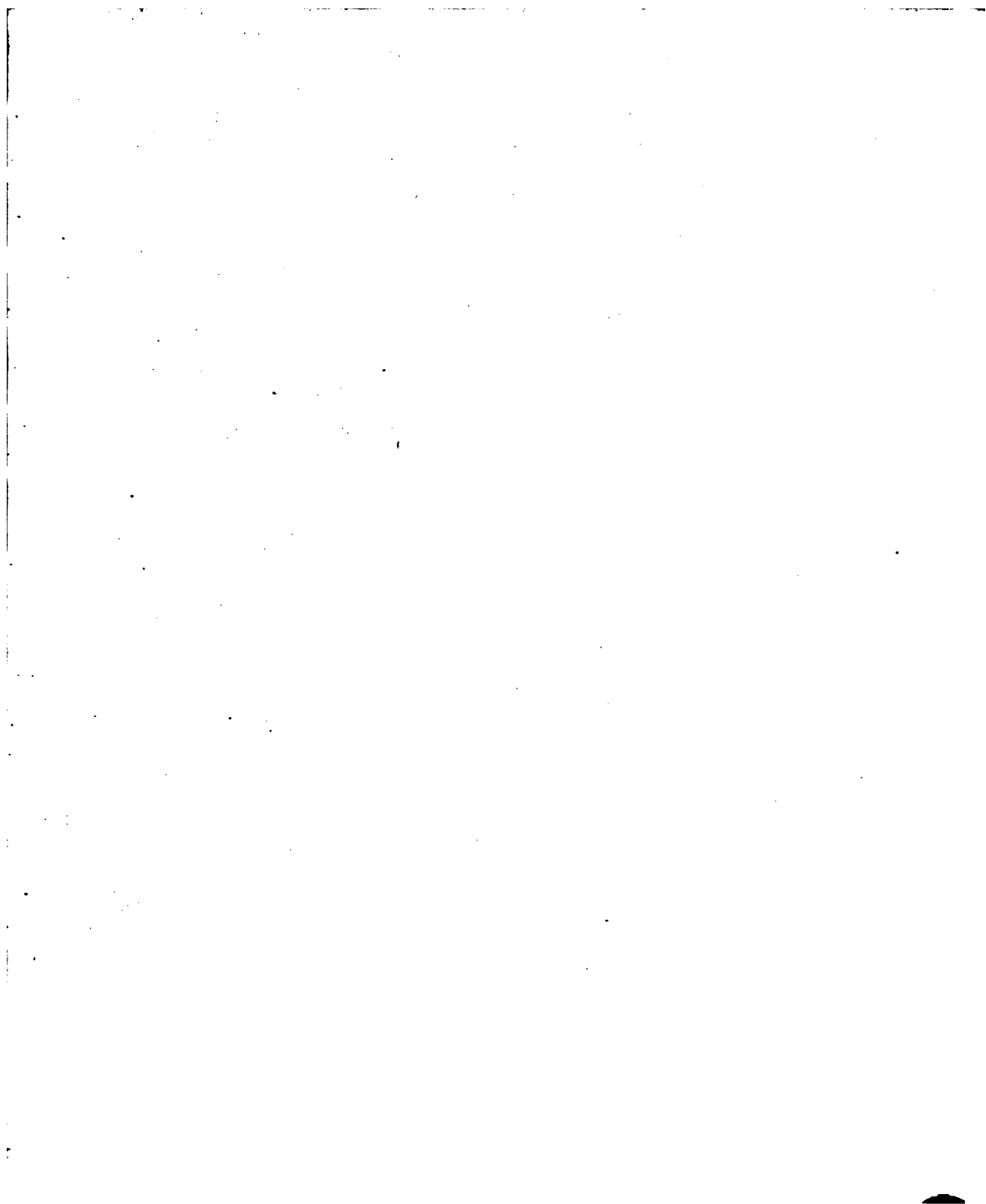
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